

Reading Policy

Statement of intent

Royal Cross School understands the importance of reading in the process of developing pupils into independent learners.

Reading is central to our ability to understand, interpret and communicate with one another.

Furthermore, pupils who read on a regular basis, in school and at home, have a higher chance of fulfilling their potential.

The aims of this policy are:

- To instil a passion for reading in pupils, which they will carry on into subsequent education and their later life.
- To set out the school's intentions and approach to reading, in order to enrich and support the curriculum.

Background

This policy has due regard to statutory framework including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE 'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework 2021

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- English and Communication Policy

Reading Strategies

At Royal Cross we are passionate about seeing every child develop an interest, enjoyment and a desire for reading. We believe that the development of reading skills plays an important role in children's language development. For this reason, we place great importance on reading, telling and sharing stories as part of our curriculum and daily routine.

At Royal Cross, children are introduced to a wide range and variety of books and stories in our Early Years class and this continues throughout the school. Stories are read daily and are an integral part of our curriculum.

Children develop reading skills in an individual way and at Royal Cross each child is personally supported in their reading journey. We have a structured approach to the teaching of reading which includes visual memory strategies, the teaching of phonics to help children decode words, an awareness of comprehension skills and a strong focus on exploring meaning. We use a wide range of books, based on a child's developmental needs to engage,

and stimulate learning. As a result of deafness, pupils at Royal Cross need access to a range of differing specialist approaches to the teaching of reading. The way we approach the teaching of reading differs from mainstream schools in that we must use a variety of approaches.

Phonics

Phonics skills are introduced systematically using a programme called 'Red Rose Phonics'. Phonics is recognised as a key tool in the acquisition of literacy skills for most children and is used when teaching most children to read and write. Phonics is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate sounds; understanding the link between the sound (phoneme) and the way it is written (grapheme). It involves the skill of blending these sounds together in order to read a word. For children accessing phonics, Royal Cross School follows the six phases of the 'Letters and sounds' framework for teaching pupils how to read for those using Phonics. Teachers will adapt their planning in order to meet the specific needs of the pupils in their class.

- **Phase 1** - In the early stages of Phonics learning, much emphasis is placed on sharing books, providing daily speaking and listening activities that are well matched to children's developing abilities and interests, and on oral segmenting and blending of familiar words. We also focus on general sound discrimination in the world around them. At Royal Cross we do this by playing fun, multisensory listening and talking games; then we move onto concepts such as rhyme and rhythm. We teach about sounds in a fun and interactive manner, and enjoy a wide variety of stories and songs throughout the day.
- **Phase 2** - Children entering this phase will have experienced a wealth of listening activities, including songs, stories and rhymes. They will be able to distinguish between speech sounds and many will be able to blend and segment words orally. The purpose of this phase is to teach at least 19 graphemes, and move children on from oral blending and segmentation to blending and segmenting with letters. By the end of the phase many children should be able to read and spell some VC and CVC words. During the phase they will be introduced to reading two-syllable words and simple captions.
- **Phase 3** - The purpose of this phase is to teach another 25 graphemes, most of them comprising two letters (e.g. oa), so the children can represent each of about 42 phonemes by a grapheme. Children also continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation in this phase and will apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions. They will learn letter names during this phase, learn to read some more tricky words and also begin to learn to spell some of these words. Whilst accessing this Phase, children progress onto reading books which are phonetically decodable and contain the sounds which they have learnt

- **Phase 4.** Children entering Phase Four will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes by a grapheme, and be able to blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. The purpose of this phase is to consolidate children’s knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words.
- **Phase 5** - The purpose of this phase is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant. Children become quicker at recognising graphemes of more than one letter in words and at blending the phonemes they represent. When spelling words they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words.
- **Phase 6** - At this stage many children will be reading longer and less familiar texts independently and with increasing fluency. The shift from learning to read to reading to learn takes place and children read for information and for pleasure. In Phase Six, many children will be able to read texts of several hundred words fluently at their first attempt. The shift from learning to read to reading to learn takes place and children read for information and for pleasure. This phase focuses more on comprehension of these longer texts and introduces concepts such as past tense and suffixes.

For children accessing Phonics, our books are phonically decodable (up to stage 5) and progressively introduce the common exception words. As a child’s reading skills develop, they will progress onto books with more complex sentences and, eventually, onto longer story books. To ensure pupils make good progress in reading, those learning to read via the Phonics method have daily direct phonics lessons. We use the Phonics Bug programme to teach letters and sounds in a fun and interactive way to children; alongside a wide variety of games within the classroom throughout the day to embed children’s learning.

It is essential that pupils do not move on too quickly as the foundations of reading and phonics are key to the development of the pupils reading.

At Royal Cross our pupils move through the programme at their own pace, depending upon their level of hearing; language development and ability to process sounds. Phonics lessons are made fun, interactive and engaging and include games, practical activities whilst also maintaining the much needed repetition for our pupils.

It is important to note however that the auditory/phonetic approach to the teaching of reading causes difficulties for most deaf pupils. Pupils within Royal Cross are deaf or have a Speech Language and Communication Need (SLCN) which impacts upon their ability to hear sounds,

process sound and develop language – all impacting upon their access to phonic cues for reading. For pupils needing extra support in their phonics learning, we therefore teach Phonics in conjunction with Visual Phonics.

Visual Phonics by Hand

‘Visual Phonics by Hand’ uses hand cues and strategies to ensure that phonics teaching is made more accessible to deaf children.

Developing an understanding of phonics will support some pupil’s reading and writing skills along with developing their lip reading and spoken language skills.

In ‘Visual Phonics by Hand’ sessions, as the sound is said, a particular hand shape or movement accompanies the sound. The combination of hearing the sound and seeing the hand shape, the hand position and lip shape clarifies the sound being taught and also in some cases, the link between the sound and its letter (grapheme). All 44 sounds (phonemes) of English can be clarified or reinforced in this way.

Again, we find, however, that this strategy only works to support the children who are otherwise able to access Phonics but who need a little extra support to ‘see’ or differentiate the sounds. We find that a large percentage of our profoundly deaf pupils do not find Phonics a useful tool when it comes to learning the skill of reading. Consequently, we devised our own reading programme.

The Whole Word Approach

As Deaf children often struggle with Phonics, we have devised a Whole Word approach to reading scheme, used in conjunction with the Jelly and Bean Scheme – the Royal Cross Reading Scheme.

The Whole Word method of literacy instruction instructs learners to recognise words as whole units without breaking them down into sounds or letter groupings. It focuses on the word as the minimum unit of meaning and therefore the essential base element of reading.

The focus is on supporting pupils to understand how to recognise words in relation to other words, in their context, and as a representation of what the word means. Whole Word approaches always emphasise learning to read through the act of reading.

It teaches reading at the word level. Pupils are not sounding out words but rather learning to say the word by recognising its written form. Context is extremely important in addition to providing images. Familiar words may initially be presented on their own, then in short sentences and eventually in longer sentences. The Jelly and Bean scheme which we use in

school supports this approach to reading, in conjunction with the scheme we have devised to go alongside this. As the children's vocabulary grows, children begin to extract rules and patterns that they can use to read new words.

The key to the teaching of reading and phonics at Royal Cross is flexibility and the selection of the correct approach to meet the specific needs of individual pupils. Alongside this is the knowledge and skills of our staff to understand the different available approaches and the ability to select, adapt and change approaches as the pupil's needs change.

Each class will have a time each day where they focus on phonics / reading activities.

These may be:

- Spelling Activities: based on the spelling patterns taught that week in class.
- Comprehension: reading a text and answering questions on it.
- 1:1 adult reading time: Individual support for reading and comprehension
- Group guided reading sessions: Working in small groups or by themselves with a member of staff to share reading and discuss texts.
- Independent Reading: the children read books/comics/newspapers or stories/poems they have written themselves.
- Follow-up tasks: linked to a guided reading session.
- Buddy reading: where an older and younger child share reading books.
- Library time: a time to explore fiction and non-fiction books in our school library.
- Specific Royal Cross Reading Scheme activities: as part of our literacy curriculum.

Children are encouraged to read widely both in and outside school. Home reading is supported through reading workshops for families. On these days families are invited in to share reading with their children in class and find out how we teach reading and phonics in Royal Cross. We also have reading incentives including certificates and badges for those who regularly read at home. These are handed out in our Friday Celebration Assemblies.

Whole school

Classes share stories on a regular basis.

One Assembly per week is dedicated to sharing a story together.

The whole school will observe national events, such as World Book Day and Children's Book Week, in order to help instil a passion in reading.

All pupils will have access to books from the school library. Books are sent home with pupils, and links to reading resources/activities are put on Termly Curriculum Newsletters.

Pupils will, in groups or as a whole class, read texts linked to their topic work.

We are visited annually by the School Library Bus where each child has the opportunity to board the bus and pick out books of their choosing.

Children can attend the school Library Club once a week.

Regular reading at home is rewarded in our Friday Celebration Assemblies.

EYFS and KS1

Pupils will take part in group reading, e.g. whole class, using a big book, a story sack using props or an interactive whiteboard; pupils will also undertake guided/individual reading of the same text in smaller groups or independently, according to the needs of the class.

Lessons are often centred around a book, putting learning into context for the children and reinforcing learning and understanding of the story.

One-to-one reading sessions with the pupils' classroom teacher are held at least once a week.

Pupils will participate in daily story time sessions.

Pupils at times will be expected to take appropriate books home to read with their parents

Have daily access to explicit phonics/English lessons, where this is appropriate.

KS2

Pupils in KS2 will have the opportunity to read for pleasure at least once per week.

Have daily access to explicit phonics and English lessons

Take home reading home work to share with families.

Parents and reading at home

Royal Cross School believes that parental involvement and encouragement can play a crucial part in pupils' reading development and we promote a home-school reading partnership by:

- Communicating with parents and sharing information with them through parent meetings, newsletters and Class Dojo
- Giving pupils a book to read at home each day to further the skills they have learned
- Encouraging parents to make notes in the pupils' diaries about reading progress made at home.
- Staff are always there for support for parents and reading / phonic workshops for families held in school.

Pupils are encouraged to read at home through the following methods:

Family learning sessions in school.

Regular contact with parents

Termly newsletters outlining children's learning

Offering termly discussions during Personal Learning Plan evaluation weeks
Annual EHCP Review meetings with parents

Reading area

The school's reading area is found in the library (with some classrooms having a reading area as part of their provision.)

Pupils will use the school library on a weekly basis and have the option to attend the school library club each week.

Assessment and record keeping

Teachers in KS1 and KS2 will record progress using B Squared on a termly basis. This will provide assessment information for each pupil for the subject lead to monitor. The subject lead will work with individual class teachers to monitor progress and discuss any barriers to pupil progress across reading phonics.

Progress in EYFS is recorded using Development Matters. Children are assessed termly throughout the year, and teachers must also submit their profile judgements for each child against the EYFS profile, based on cumulative observational evidence recorded over the course of the year. This must be submitted to the Local Authority.

Key roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of the Reading Policy, in collaboration with the SLT
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, ensuring that the procedure outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy is followed.

The Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring all teachers have familiarised themselves with the Reading Policy.
- Supporting colleagues with any aspect of the Reading Policy.
- When required, assist with the planning and selection of new resources.
- Informing staff of any updates to the Reading Policy.
- Accepting responsibility for all reading resources and keeping colleagues informed of available resources.
- Liaising with the Headteacher and governors and report any developments to the curriculum committee.

- Review and scrutinise class and year group assessment data in order to track pupils' progress.
- Monitor reading planning, observing and offering feedback on the teaching of reading.